



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

March 14, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR David R. Hill
 General Counsel

FROM: Kevin M. Kolevar, Director *KMK*
 Office of Electricity Delivery and
 Energy Reliability (OE)

SUBJECT: 2007 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
 Annual Planning Summary

Attached for your information is the NEPA Annual Planning Summary for FY 2007 for the Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (OE). The Summary describes the status of ongoing and projected environmental assessments and environmental impact statements (EIS) within OE. OE is the lead for the preparation of a Programmatic EIS for the designation of energy corridors on Federal lands in the 11 Western States as mandated by section 368(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAct). OE will be responsible for preparing a similar Programmatic EIS for the Eastern States to enable land management plans to be amended by August 2009, as required by section 368(b) of EPAct.

Other than the two EIS's that are required under EPAct, all the rest of OE's NEPA activities arise from OE's traditional role of processing Presidential permit applications. OE is not aware of any other Presidential permit applications that will be submitted within the immediate future beyond those identified in the Summary.

Questions or matters related to this NEPA Planning Summary should be directed to OE's NEPA Compliance Officer, Tony Como, at 202-586-5935.

Attachment

cc: (w/attachment)
C. Borgstrom, GC-20
L. Jessee, GC-20
J. Tibbs, GC-90



**OFFICE OF ELECTRICITY DELIVERY
AND
ENERGY RELIABILITY**

2007 NEPA Annual Planning Summary

Ongoing Environmental Assessments

Montana-Alberta Tie Line – Montana-Alberta Tie Line has applied to OE for a Presidential permit to construct a 230-kV electric transmission line across the U.S.-Canada border in the vicinity of Cut Bank, Montana. The line would be 126 miles long within the United States. DOE and the State of Montana Department of Environmental Quality are cooperating on the preparation of an environmental review document. The State of Montana is considering the document an EIS because of the State's procedural requirements. OE believes the project may require only an Environmental Assessment. Nevertheless, OE noticed and held scoping meetings in December 2005. It is expected that the pre-approval EA will be completed and distributed by May 2007. If OE can make a Finding of No Significant Impact, a final decision on the Presidential permit could occur by mid-summer 2007.

Ongoing Environmental Impact Statements

Port Angeles-Juan de Fuca Transmission Project – Sea Breeze Corporation has applied to OE for a Presidential permit to construct a ± 150 -kV direct current submarine cable from Port Angeles, Washington, to Victoria Island, British Columbia, Canada. There are two Federal actions associated with this project: issuance of a Presidential permit by OE; and approval of an interconnection to the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) electric system. BPA is the NEPA lead for this project and OE is cooperating in the preparation of the EIS. The Draft EIS was published on March 9, 2007. The 45-day public comment period closes on April 24, 2007, with a public hearing scheduled for April 10, 2007. OE expects to issue a Record of Decision by the end of calendar year 2007. [**NOTE:** *This project is also reflected in BPA's NEPA Planning Summary.*]

San Luis Rio Colorado Project – North Branch has applied to OE for a Presidential permit to construct a 500-kV electric transmission line across the U.S.-Mexico border south of Yuma, Arizona. The proposed line would originate at a new natural gas-fired power plant planned for construction one mile south of the international border, and would extend for about 25 miles into the United States. This proposed transmission project also has two Federal actions: issuance of a Presidential permit by OE; and approval of an interconnection to the Western Area Power Administration's (WAPA) electric system. WAPA is the NEPA lead for this project and OE is cooperating in the preparation of the EIS. The Draft EIS was issued on November 3, 2006, and a public

hearing was convened on December 7, 2006. The Final EIS is anticipated in late spring 2007 and OE expects to issue a Record of Decision in early summer 2007.

Tucson Electric Power Company – Tucson Electric Power Company (TEP) has applied for a Presidential permit to construct a double-circuit, 345-kV transmission line across the U.S.-Mexico border in the vicinity of Nogales, Arizona. DOE is the NEPA lead and the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission are cooperating agencies in the preparation of this EIS. The Final EIS was published in January 2005. Since publication of the Final EIS, TEP has identified an additional alternative it is considering submitting to the Federal agencies for review. It is possible this new alternative will require some supplemental environmental analysis. However, until TEP submits this alternative for formal consideration by the Federal agencies, no determination can be made on the extent of the supplemental analysis or what, if any, additional public review may be required.

Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Land in Western States –

Pursuant to section 368(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, DOE and the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, the Interior, and Defense are cooperating in the preparation of a Programmatic EIS for the purpose of designating energy corridors on Federal lands in the eleven contiguous Western States. DOE is the co-lead Agency together with the Bureau of Land Management. Additional cooperating agencies include: Department of Agriculture; Department of Defense; Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service; the States of California and Wyoming; Lincoln County, Wyo.; Lincoln County Conservation District, Wyo.; Sweetwater County, Wyo.; Sweetwater County Conservation District, Wyo.; Uinta County, Wyo.; Uinta County Conservation District, Wyo.; and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. The Draft Programmatic EIS is planned to be released in late spring 2007 for a 90-day public comment period. By statute, the EIS must be completed by August 2007, but actual completion is anticipated at the end of 2007.

Projected Environmental Assessments

British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC) is considering applying for an amendment to an existing Presidential permit which authorizes three 138-kV submarine cables that pass through U.S. territorial waters in the Strait of Georgia between Vancouver Island and the State of Washington. BCTC is considering replacing these cables with three 230-kv cables. BCTC proposes to begin replacement work during summer 2007 and to complete the project by fall 2008. However, BCTC has not yet submitted an application to OE to amend the Presidential permit.